

Notice of Allowability

Application No.

10/780,289

Examiner

Andre' L. Jackson

Applicant(s)

LEE, SANG KYU

Art Unit

3677

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address--

All claims being allowable, PROSECUTION ON THE MERITS IS (OR REMAINS) CLOSED in this application. If not included herewith (or previously mailed), a Notice of Allowance (PTOL-85) or other appropriate communication will be mailed in due course. **THIS NOTICE OF ALLOWABILITY IS NOT A GRANT OF PATENT RIGHTS.** This application is subject to withdrawal from issue at the initiative of the Office or upon petition by the applicant. See 37 CFR 1.313 and MPEP 1308.

1. ☒ This communication is responsive to the amendment of October 3, 2005.
2. ☒ The allowed claim(s) is/are 1,3 and 4, renumbered as claims 1-3.
3. ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
 - a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some* c) ☐ None of the:
 1. ☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this national stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* Certified copies not received: _____.

Applicant has THREE MONTHS FROM THE "MAILING DATE" of this communication to file a reply complying with the requirements noted below. Failure to timely comply will result in ABANDONMENT of this application.
THIS THREE-MONTH PERIOD IS NOT EXTENDABLE.

4. ☐ A SUBSTITUTE OATH OR DECLARATION must be submitted. Note the attached EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT or NOTICE OF INFORMAL PATENT APPLICATION (PTO-152) which gives reason(s) why the oath or declaration is deficient.
 5. ☐ CORRECTED DRAWINGS (as "replacement sheets") must be submitted.
 - (a) ☐ including changes required by the Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) attached
 - 1) ☐ hereto or 2) ☐ to Paper No./Mail Date _____.
 - (b) ☐ including changes required by the attached Examiner's Amendment / Comment or in the Office action of Paper No./Mail Date _____.
- Identifying indicia such as the application number (see 37 CFR 1.84(c)) should be written on the drawings in the front (not the back) of each sheet. Replacement sheet(s) should be labeled as such in the header according to 37 CFR 1.121(d).
6. ☐ DEPOSIT OF and/or INFORMATION about the deposit of BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL must be submitted. Note the attached Examiner's comment regarding REQUIREMENT FOR THE DEPOSIT OF BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1. <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 5. <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| 2. <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | 6. <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413),
Paper No./Mail Date _____. |
| 3. <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statements (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08),
Paper No./Mail Date _____ | 7. <input type="checkbox"/> Examiner's Amendment/Comment |
| 4. <input type="checkbox"/> Examiner's Comment Regarding Requirement for Deposit
of Biological Material | 8. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Examiner's Statement of Reasons for Allowance |
| | 9. <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____. |

REASONS FOR ALLOWANCE

The following is an examiner's statement of reasons for allowance:

The prior art of record fails to disclose or suggest the combination of structural limitations and the specific arrangement of these structural limitations as set forth in applicant's claims. In particular, the prior art made of record fails to disclose or suggest a hinge including a locking block comprising a shaft hole in a predetermined portion of the locking block to extend through the locking block, with the coupling shaft being inserted into the shaft hole. A guide slot provided in a predetermined portion of the locking block to be parallel to the shaft hole to allow a locking piece to be seated in the guide slot. A first pin insert hole provided in a predetermined portion of the locking block to be provided in a perpendicular to the guide slot and a torsion spring placed in the guide slot while being supported at a first end thereof on an inner surface of the guide slot, and supported at a second end thereof by a stop shoulder of the locking piece to elastically bias the locking piece to an outside of the guide slot.

Park et al is considered the closest prior art reference. Park et al discloses a hinge for a folding ladder having first and second ladder frames, the hinge comprising a main hinge unit, comprising first and second support arms commonly mounted to an upper end of the first ladder frame; and first and second disc parts extending from upper ends of the first and second support arms, respectively, the first and second disc parts being spaced apart from each other by a predetermined interval; a subsidiary hinge unit, comprising: a subsidiary support arm mounted to an upper end of the second ladder frame; and a subsidiary disc part extending from an upper end of the subsidiary support arm, the subsidiary disc part being disposed between the first and second disc parts, with a plurality of notches being provided along a peripheral edge of the

Art Unit: 3677

subsidiary disc part; and a locking unit, comprising: a locking block to engage into one of the plurality of notches of the subsidiary hinge unit, thus preventing both the main and subsidiary hinge units from rotating relative to each other; a press knob outwardly projected from the first disc part, the press knob being coupled to the locking block by a coupling shaft; and a return spring fitted over the coupling shaft to return the press knob and the locking block to original positions thereof. However, Park et al fails to disclose or suggest a specific arrangement of a locking block including a shaft hole in a predetermined portion of the locking block to extend through the locking block, a guide slot provided in a predetermined portion of the locking block to be parallel to the shaft hole to allow a locking piece to be seated in the guide slot, a first pin insert hole provided in a predetermined portion of the locking block, a torsion spring placed in the guide slot while being supported at a first end thereof on an inner surface of the guide slot, and supported at a second end thereof by a stop shoulder of the locking piece.

None of the other prior art references disclose or suggest the specific structural arrangement of claimed limitations whether taken singly or used in combination thereof.

Subsequently, the prior art references do not cure the deficiencies of Park et al.

Therefore, the Examiner believes applicant's claims as presently presented are patentably distinct from the prior art made of record.

CONCLUSION

Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably accompany the issue fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled "Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance."

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Andre' L. Jackson whose telephone number is (571) 272-7067. The examiner can normally be reached on Mon. - Fri. (9:30 am - 6 pm).

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Judy J. Swann can be reached on (571) 272-7075. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

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ALJ


ROBERT J. SANDY
PRIMARY EXAMINER